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*The Hunting of Leviathan. Seventeenth-Century Reactions to the Materialism and Moral Philosophy of Thomas Hobbes.* By SAMUEL I. MINTZ. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962. Pp. x + 189.

The title of the book is somewhat misleading. The author deals only with hostile reactions to Hobbes's materialism and moral philosophy by Englishmen of the seventeenth century. After having surveyed Hobbes's life, his "system in retrospect," and "the contemporary setting," he discusses the seventeenth-century English reactions to Hobbes's materialism and to his moral philosophy and then summarizes his results in a conclusion. He adds an appendix containing a "Check-list of Anti-Hobbes Literature and Allusion in England, 1650-1700" and an extensive bibliography (pp. 157-83). On the proper occasion he publishes a hitherto unpublished letter to Hobbes (pp. 124-25).

The author treats his material by surveying rather than analyzing it. One could say on his behalf that most of the writings which he considers are not in need of analysis while the rest have been analyzed by other scholars.

Mintz's study leaves one with the impression that Hobbes's "substantive" influence on his contemporary countrymen was nil or, at the most, infinitesimal. He does say that, under Hobbes's influence, the arguments of his critics "assumed a Hobbist form" (p. 151) or that Hobbes compelled his critics "to combat him with his own weapons of logical exactitude and severe reasoning" (p. 149). Yet "logical exactitude and severe reasoning" are not a preserve of Hobbes. In order to justify his assertion, Mintz would have to show that it was a peculiarly Hobbsonian version of those intellectual virtues which molded to some extent late seventeenth-century English thought.

Hobbes was attacked in the first place on account of his materialism, materialism being regarded by all of his critics as the "main root of atheism" (p. 67). Hobbes's materialism is most vulnerable to attack since "he did not prove, or even attempt to prove, that matter alone is real" (p. 66). The argument which the more intelligent men among his critics "thought was the strongest was the one which asserted that matter in motion cannot by itself account for thought" (p. 69). The arguments used for proving this assertion were for the most part traditional (pp. 77, 85, 100-101). Mintz is silent on the question of whether Hobbes's critics saw the difference between Hobbes's materialism and traditional (say, Epicurean) materialism. Accordingly he is not concerned with the difference between the traditional arguments and the arguments peculiar to the more original among Hobbes's critics. Henry More and Joseph Glanvill, it appears, used the fact of witchcraft as an important argument for refuting materialism (pp. 86, 102-3, 109). More's doctrine according to which "all substance has dimensions" or that God himself is extended, is of a different description (pp. 88-92), but for the reason given it does not become clear whether that doctrine as peculiar to More is a response to the materialism peculiar to Hobbes.

Hobbes was attacked in the second place because of his moral teaching, especially his denial of freedom of the will and his promotion of libertinism. Bishop Bramhall's criticism of Hobbes's determinism is justly famous for its clarity and fairness as distinguished from originality (p. 113). In the words of Cudworth, he wrote "like a Scholastick divine," which implies that he regarded the will as a faculty; according to Cudworth, one refutes determinism simply by showing "that there is another substance in the world besides body." Yet "by taking the position that the will is necessarily inclined toward the good, Cudworth gave much ground to the determinists"; while "vehemently rejecting" the understanding of freedom as "indifferency," he eventually accepted "indifferency" (pp. 127-33).

The criticism of Hobbes as a promoter of

libertinism emerged after the Restoration. Hobbes was made responsible for the licentiousness of the age; that criticism is worthless (pp. 135–47). The criticism of Hobbes's "egoistic psychology" was more serious; that criticism consisted of the reassertion of man's natural sociality which foreshadows Shaftesbury's "man of feeling" (p. 143). "The view that man is naturally good was most fully developed by Richard Cumberland. . . . In some few places Cumberland anticipated the nineteenth-century utilitarians; but he returned always to a distinctly Platonic conception of morality" (p. 145). One would like to know what were Cumberland's anticipations of utilitarianism, a distinctly anti-Platonic view, how he reconciled them with his Platonism, and, above all, whether it was not Hobbes, "admired by the Utilitarians" (p. 155), who moved Cumberland to take a few steps in the general direction of utilitarianism. The half sentence which Mintz devotes to this question (p. 154) is quite inadequate.

"The principal objection to [Hobbes] . . . was that he was an atheist" (pp. vii, 45). Mintz does not believe that Hobbes was an atheist. He settles the issue to his satisfaction by referring to the fact that no "overt statement" denying the existence of God occurs in Hobbes's writings and by relying mainly on what Hobbes said in his "Considerations upon the Reputation, Loyalty, Manners and Religion of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury" (*English Works*, ed. Molesworth, IV, 425–29). Yet, according to Mintz, "Hobbes maintained that Scripture, and not reason, is our only warrant for believing in God's existence" (p. 43), and there are serious doubts as to whether Hobbes believed in the truth of Scripture. In other words, "Cudworth referred to Hobbes as 'the Atheist'" and Cudworth "understood perfectly what Hobbes was saying" (p. 96). How inadequate Mintz's treatment of this issue is can be seen most simply from the fact that, according to him, "Hobbes thought of [God] in the Aristotelian fashion as both unmoved and uncaused" (p. 64); he fails to mention that Hobbes denies God's being unmoved (*De corpore* XXVI.1).

While disagreeing with Hobbes's seven-

teenth-century critics regarding Hobbes's being an atheist, Mintz agrees with them as to Hobbes's moral teaching being "ethical relativism" (VII). His references to seventeenth-century criticisms of Hobbes's ethical relativism are scanty; those critics surely did not speak of "ethical relativism." They justly ascribed to Hobbes the doctrine that there is nothing simply and absolutely good or evil, noble or base, just or unjust. Yet in order to be exact and fair, one would have to add what Mintz fails to add, that Hobbes recognizes the existence of things which are "honorable by nature," that is, not by convention or the sovereign's fiat, to say nothing of his teaching that there is natural right and natural law. That his natural-right teaching did not meet the requirements of his contemporary critics is easily intelligible; but we who can view the seventeenth-century situation "in retrospect" must cease to be blind to the difference between "ethical relativism" and any form of natural right teaching. This peculiar blindness goes far to explain Mintz's over-all judgment, according to which Hobbes did not exercise any substantive influence on English seventeenth-century thought. It suffices to mention the name of Locke—a name which barely occurs in Mintz's study.

A few minor points might be mentioned here. Mintz erroneously speaks of "two treatises *Humane Nature* . . . and *De Corpore Politico*, or the *Elements of Law*, both of which circulated widely in manuscript until they were combined and published in 1650" (p. 9). The true relation of the *Elements of Law* to those two treatises was cleared up by Tönnies in the preface to his edition of the *Elements of Law* in 1889. Neither in his statement on the drafts of *De corpore* (p. 9 n.) nor in his bibliography does Mintz mention Baron Cay von Brockdorff's "Die Urform der 'Computatio sive logica' des Hobbes," (*Veröffentlichungen der Hobbes-Gesellschaft*, [Kiel, 1934]). "Glanvill called this doctrine (the denial of spirit) 'Sadducism,' and saw it as the inevitable prerequisite to the denial of theism" (p. 41); Hobbes himself had said earlier (*Leviathan*, chap. viii) that "the Sadducees [did] not believe there were at all any spirits, which is

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very near to direct atheism"; the passage has some bearing on the question as to whether Hobbes was an atheist according to his view of atheism. Mintz asserts that Hobbes counted Cato among the classical authors who instilled their readers with democratic principles (p. 47); he does not indicate any passage where Hobbes does this. According to Mintz, Hobbes teaches that "a stable commonwealth will stamp out dissent" (p. 59); he fails to mention that Hobbes was also concerned with bringing about toleration, as Sorbière states in his preface to his French translation of *De cive* (1649) or that he had a bias toward the Independents (*Leviathan*, chap. xlvii). Mintz does not tell us why he believes that "Hobbes believed that any man endowed with intelligence and knowledge of the laws of reasoning can reason correctly and discover the truth; whether a man is otherwise virtuous or not is without consequence" (p. 83).

We are still in need of such a study of Hobbes's influence on English seventeenth-century thought as is based on a solid understanding of Hobbes's teaching. The author of such a study would do well if he paid proper attention to what Hobbes's seventeenth-century critics say about Hobbes's theology—natural theology on the one hand and revealed theology on the other—for it may be assumed that the present-day historian lacks the theological training and the sure grasp of theological issues which the better ones among those critics possessed as a matter of course. Furthermore, Hobbes was a European figure; he may have exercised an influence on seventeenth-century English thought by means of his continental influence. Finally, one must always keep in mind that it was not prudent at the time to acknowledge that one had learned something from Hobbes.

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